

Vol. 12 No. 3

Merry Christmas from the Montana Aeronautics Division

December, 1979



The Aeronautics Division staff, left to right, Jerry Burrows, Jack Wilson, Pat Meyer, Paula Lindsey, Ruth Anderson, Vern Moody, Ted Mathis, Sam Griggs, Dave Kneedler and Mike Ferguson.

Fly The Biggest Piece Back

The Mountain Press Publishing Company has announced the publication of Steve Smith's *Fly the Biggest Piece Back*, a lively biography of Missoula pilot Bob Johnson.

Bob Johnson was among the first mountain pilots, and his pioneering work established many techniques of mountain flying still in use today; smokejumping, freight transport to backcountry airstrips, search and

rescue, seeding and dusting, fire reconnaissance, and others. Johnson Flying Service grew from one single-engine biplane to a nationally recognized company with a fleet of planes, including the heavy prop-jets used in the 1970s. Steve Smith tells the story in a vivid and exciting way and includes vignettes of the other pilots and personalities involved in the company.

These books are available from local book stores or Mountain Press Publishing Company, P.O. Box 2399, Missoula, MT 59806, (406) 728-1900 at a cost of \$14.95 each.

FIRC

The Montana Aeronautics Division is again holding it's annual Flight Instructor Refresher Clinic on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, March 7, 8, and 9, 1980 in Helena. Please note that this is a date change from what had been previously listed on our calendar.

This is an FAA approved clinic conducted by GAITS Teaching Seminars with 24 hours of classroom instruction for renewal of all current flight instructor certificates and covers annual requirements for all chief flight instructors.

If your flight instructor certificate has expired a check ride will be necessary.

Scholarships are available to the first thirty applicants who are Montana registered flight instructors.

The Aeronautics Division will provide two aircraft and two Flight Instructor Designated Examiners who will be on hand Monday, March 10, in Helena for any flight instructor maneuvers that may need sharpening or flight instructor check rides for those with expired certificates.

For further information and applications check with your local FBO or contact the Montana Aeronautics Division, P.O. Box 5178, Helena, MT 59601, (406) 449-2506.

Administrator's Column

It gave me a great deal of pleasure to be invited to officiate Gary Blain's successful attempt in breaking the world's solo record on his 16th birthday. Gary had to exceed 37 aircraft to break the old world record which he easily accomplished by soloing 53 airplanes and 5 helicopters, all different models. The documented record of aircraft flown by Gary was certified and sent to the *Guinness Book of World Records*.

Gary has since passed his drivers test and is now legal on the ground too. I would like to again congratulate Gary on his success in achieving the world record. See pages 4 and 5 of this newsletter for photos and a more detailed description of this event.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

The Montana Coal Board turned down our request for a grant to conduct a study on the feasibility of a public airport at Colstrip. If the study had proved a public need for an airport then the necessary steps would have been taken to include Colstrip into the National Airport System Plan (NASP). If an airport was to be constructed at Colstrip sometime in the future it would then have been eligible to receive grant money from the FAA's aviation trust fund, more commonly known as the Airport Development Aid Program. Although there was considerable support of the proposal, the Rosebud County Commissioners voiced strong opposition fearing possible future financial involvement.

Needless to say the Aeronautics Board and the Aeronautics Division are disappointed in the actions taken, as we are reasonably confident that such a study would prove that Colstrip has a strong public need for access to the National Air Transportation System and can meet all of the criteria to be accepted into the NASP. It was our desire to pave the way for the town of Colstrip, in the event they become an incorporated city and should ever desire to pursue construction of a public airport.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

The Montana Aeronautics Board met on December 7 to hold their regular bi-monthly board meeting. They reviewed the hearing transcript and subsequently approved the resolution regarding the Big Sky Airlines Industrial Development Revenue Bond issue. The board further reviewed the memorandum of understanding which was submitted to Big Sky for their review and approval. This document details the reservation of certain board rights and contingencies.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

By the time you receive this newsletter the Civil Aeronautics Board should have made a determination on the level of essential air service for the highline and eastern route system which Frontier is currently flying. If the communities are not in agreement with the CAB's determination they have the right to appeal to a three-member staff panel. After an appeal is filed a hearing with the communities will be held. Anyone desiring may attend the hearing. This will give members of each affected community, not versed in the technicalities of administrative law, the opportunity to present their views directly to the decision-makers. We look forward to working with each community, the CAB and the airlines in an effort to receive the highest level of service for our state.

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On behalf of the entire Aeronautics staff I would like to thank all of you for your support and involvement in aeronautical matters during this past year and wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year.



Montana and the Sky
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COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

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Creative Press



GADO Consolidation

We were pleased to receive the following letter from the Chief of the Flight Standards Division, FAA in Denver. The joint effort on the part of many within (and without) the State of Montana succeeded in stopping this consolidation.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION

ROCKY MOUNTAIN REGION
10435 EAST 25TH AVENUE
AURORA, COLORADO 80010



NOV 8 1979

MONTANA AERONAUTICS DIVISION
HELENA, MONTANA

Dear Aviation Users and Aviation Industry of Montana:

I am pleased to announce that a decision has been made wherein the Billings and Helena General Aviation District Offices will not be consolidated.

Many factors had to be considered to reach a decision. Among these were a feasibility study, two public factfinding meetings, and letters from concerned citizens, businesses, aviation groups, etc. In this case, the decision was made in a timely manner primarily because of the cooperation and participation in the process by various individuals and aviation interests.

Sincerely,

RICHARD L. DEVEREAUX
Chief, Flight Standards Division



Navigational Aids

By: Jerry Burrows
Aviation Technician

The Sidney non-directional radio beacon (NDB) or H-Marker operating on 358 KHz with the identifier SDY has been completely refurbished this year.

With the capable help of electronics technician, Lloyd Scoles, who maintains the facility, the counter-poise or underground wiring portion of the system was reworked in July. This included replacing underground wires, ground rods and soldering all underground connections.

The overhead or flat-top portion of the system was completely replaced in mid-November. A new design for the down leads was designed and is now in use for the Sidney facility.

Technician Scoles has indicated during testing procedures that the 100 watt transmitter is now putting maximum power to the antenna with very little loss. If in fact this new antenna system does radiate further than those we have been using in the past, it will be attempted on some of our other older facilities.

We would appreciate receiving pilot reports on Sidney with information such as distance and altitude you received it. We are continually trying to improve our stations to get the maximum range and effectiveness for the type of equipment we have available. Your comments on these facilities is always appreciated. We would also appreciate a call if you discover any station off the air.

Libby is the only new station that we are working on at the present time. We hope to have the land leased and the necessary licensing paperwork accomplished so that the facility can be operational by next summer.



Gary congratulated by his mother, Aldona Blain.



Lloyd Scoles, Sidney NDB Technician, making final connection to the H-Marker.



Gary taking off in A.J. Patenaude's Call Air.



Keith Fitchett congratulated Gary after flying his Piper Navajo.



The finishing touch on Gary's birthday was a parachute jump. Left to right, Al Blain, Ron Litton, Gary, and Wally Blain.



Gary was congratulated by Milt Kramlick, Combs Airways, after flying their Aero Commander 500B.

Blain Breaks Record

Gary Blain spent his 16th birthday earning a place in aviation's record books—flying 58 different aircraft, solo. Five of the 58 were helicopters.

It began several months ago when Gary was thumbing through an aviation trade magazine and read of a 16-year-old California girl who soloed 37 separate aircraft to set a world's record.

With his 16th birthday coming up, Gary enlisted his father, Gerhart Blain, and his flight instructor Ron Litton, in a campaign to celebrate his birthday with a shot at the record.

They opened with a flurry of telephone calls.

To line up 58 horses for a teenager to ride on his birthday, 58 bicycles or 58 automobiles would be a mammoth task. But to arrange for nearly \$3 million worth of aircraft to be on hand for Gary's 16th seemed an ambitious goal.

But the commitments came. In addition to aircraft being donated by private individuals, many commercial operators donated new and used inventory. These operators included Gillis Aviation, Lynch Flying Service, Upperwest Aviation, Red Lodge Airways, Combs Airways, Billings Aircraft, and Joliet Spraying Service.

Some of the pilots quizzed later said they were flattered to be a part of a world record breaking event. Others jumped at the chance to congregate with birds of a feather at an impromptu fly-in. But most said, in effect, "If Gerhart says the kid can do it, I believe he will do it."

Mike Ferguson, Administrator of the Montana Aeronautics Division was contacted and asked to officiate and document the event so the world record would be acceptable for the *Guinness Book of World Records*.

In the days leading up to October 13th, Gary and teacher Litton wore out the air in dual instruction so the youth would qualify to solo each of the 58 aircraft in the line-up.

It was a logistics nightmare.

One night, while Litton and Gary shuffled notes and made frantic last minute arrangements, someone remarked, "It looks like the D-Day invasion."

Litton looked up and remarked:

"Eisenhower had it easy."

Eisenhower only had to make one phone call to be sure all the planes would be there.

Saturday morning the show began at the Laurel Municipal Airport. The sun was still burning the fog off the Yellowstone River when light aircraft and \$100,000 twin-engine airplanes began to land at the asphalt strip in the midst of wheatfields north of the railroad town.

Gary was scheduled to take to the skies in a fresh plane every 10 minutes.

But by 7:20 a.m. it looked like the Battle of Britain over the Laurel strip.

Planes, like mosquitoes, filled the skies, waiting for a chance to land.

Father Gerhart skittered to and fro, like a hen with chicks, waving his arms in an attempt to control traffic.

Litton and Ferguson opted to delay Gary's early takeoffs until nearly 20 of the volunteer airplanes had landed and been parked.

Then, a one-man rodeo that would last until nearly 5 p.m. began as Gary stepped into a warmed-up plane and pointed it down the runway.

He opened with a Cessna 310C, landed and jogged to a waiting Piper PA 28-235. While he was still in the air, brother Al was warming up a Grumman AA1C and a Cessna 152II was being taxied into position.

He flew two twin engine Barons, a 40-year-old Piper Cub, and an open-cockpit homebuilt Evans Volksplane with a VW engine.

Soon he was putting a plane in the air, circling the countryside and landing at a clip of one craft every five minutes.

Litton, Ferguson and Gary's father were checking schedules, checking watches and ordering fresh airplanes to the line.

At times, the watch checker became a bit impatient when the 16-year-old would leave the field and linger a bit in the blue.

"Where is he?" Gerhart would fret.

"He's out there in an Aero Commander enjoying himself," brother Al would answer.

Since the record they were shooting for demanded that Gary solo 37 different models, Ferguson and Litton checked each aircraft before Gary crawled aboard to be sure it was not a duplicate of one flown earlier.

By 10:30 Gary had flown everything on the field and disappeared into the sky enroute to Billings Logan International Airport to add a Combs Aero Commander and a pair of single-engine planes to his tally.

Meanwhile, at the Blain home airstrip on the Yellowstone River west of Blue Creek, more birds were dropping out of the sky.

When Gary returned to his home field, Litton asked, "Do you want to take a break?"

Gary, a shy youth with a face of a choirboy and the gangly body of a spring colt, blushed and replied, "No, I think I'll fly another airplane."

Sometime near 2 p.m., Gary Blain, teenager, became Gary Blain, World's Champion Solo Artist, as he put his 38th craft into the air.

How good is he?

Pilots, the owners of \$15,000 to \$25,000 aircraft put into the trust of a youth scarcely this side of puberty, whistled as Gary landed their planes.

One whispered, "That kid lands my airplane better than I do."

He made 58 landings in 58 airplanes and helicopters, each as smooth as cream.

The sun was cutting its autumn course low across the horizon when Litton said, "That's it. You've flown everything there is to fly."

Then followed the chatter of camera lenses as Gary was photographed with his father, his instructor, the FAA and Aeronautics Division officials, his kissing grandmothers and a flock of helicopters.

And that was it.

Almost.

While his parents congratulated one another upon having lived through a hectic 16th birthday party, Gary, brother Al and instructor Litton strapped on parachutes and climbed into an airplane piloted by Gary's uncle. Minutes later, chutes were blossoming over the valley.



Gary after soloing three different models of the Bell Jet Ranger and one Bell 47G3B1.



Rich McKamey congratulating Gary upon completion of a successful flight in his homebuilt Evans Volksplane.



Cessna Ag-Truck almost ready for take off.



A Cessna 310 was the first plane to be soloed by Gary, owned by his father and Jim Bennett.



Preparing for takeoff in a Cessna 185.



Gary getting into a 400 Commanche owned by Robert Downs of Hardin.



Gary in the Pitts Special preparing for takeoff.



Upon return in Jim Steffek's Bonanza M-35.



Ron Litton in keeping with tradition cut Gary's shirt tail after soloing a Piper PA-11, the last of the 58 aircraft.



Ralph Hoffman's Bonanza H-35 was also piloted by Gary. Instructor Ron Litton stands in foreground.



Gary flanked by "Mac" McDonald, FAA, GADO inspector (left) and Mike Ferguson, Administrator of the Aeronautics Division.



Lynch Flying Service donated the use of this new Cessna 182RG.



Gary was congratulated by Ralph Nelles after successfully soloing Ralph's D-55 Baron.



After just returning from one of the 58 aircraft in a twin Comanche owned by Schaak Brothers.

AMRS

The Montana Aeronautics Division will again host the Montana Mechanics Refresher Seminar on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, February 5, 6, and 7, 1980, in Helena.

This year we will have several new additions to our speakers, new topics, and a new time frame.

We will have presentations by Cessna, Piper, Continental and Lycoming. Presentation on the Bendix fuel injection, aero propellers, Bell helicopters and turbine engines by Pratt & Whitney and Garrett will also be made.

The one and only Arnold Nickson will also be on hand, who should need no introduction.

Chrome Plate will be there with another excellent presentation.

Thursday afternoon the Billings and Helena GADOs will present a joint program on IA renewals and other topics. Both GADOs have agreed to accept attendance at this seminar for IA renewal in lieu of IA meetings in each district.

For further details and an application see your nearest FBO or contact the Aeronautics Division, P.O. Box 5178, Helena, MT 59601, (406) 449-2506.

Calendar

February 5-7 — Aviation Mechanics Refresher Seminar - see above article.

February 14-16 — Montana Aviation Trades Association Convention, Colonial Inn, Helena. Contact Karen Lathrop at 453-4021 (Great Falls) for details.

March 7-9 — Flight Instructor Refresher Clinic - see article.

March 11-13 — 6th Annual Aviation Maintenance Seminar, North Dakota. Contact David Carlson, Williston (701) 572-3773.

June 13 & 14 — Montana Pilots Convention, Billings.

June 29 — Flying Farmers Queen Joan Wilson Fly-In, Moore, MT.

July 19 & 20 — Beacon Star Antique Airfield Fly-In.

October 3-5 — Montana Flying Farmers Convention, Helena.

October 4 — Halloween Air Race.

CONGRATULATIONS!

FAA Certificates Issued Recently to Pilots

PRIVATE

Dennis M. Davis, Miles City
Roger D. Wright, Laurel
Alfred J. Daigneau, Billings
Charles D. Baarsch, Billings
Nancy Jo Stockton, Billings
Robert W. Grimes, II, Billings
Ronald W. Armstrong, Billings
David W. Dewald, Billings
Judy Van Voast
Alan J. Lerner, Billings
Gary R. Meyer, Billings
Frank C. Richter, Billings
Walter L. Ware, Scobey
Sharon M. Nelson, Sidney
Kenneth A. Samuelson, Lewistown
Robert B. Jam, Jr., Billings
Arvid B. Wedul, Billings
Glen A. Larson, Billings
Sylvester L. Lahren, Billings
Joesph E. Mudd, Bridger
Marydean Dickey, Billings
Cheryl M. Crandall, Billings
Gerald L. Dubois, Billings
Dennis W. Johnson, Billings
Jeffrey G. Bost, Billings
Greg J. Hatch, Billings
Ronnie L. Moross, Pray
Barry L. Chubb, Livingston
Gerald H. Ellis, Broadus
Kirk K. Lund, Billings
Brian J. Schwend, Rosebud
Jose L. Johnson, Terry
Joseph D. Stevenson, Miles City
Jerry C. Kimball, Miles City
Glen L. Arnold, Glasgow
Rolland W. Arnold, Billings
Joseph E. Brand, Great Falls
Bradley C. Fay, Billings
Ted F. Moseman, Fort Peck
Steven F. Curtis, Billings
Richard L. Dyck, Wolf Point
Phil R. Morrow, Billings
Michael C. Kaiser, Glasgow
Joseph E. Philippi, Nashua
Nancy Etchart, Glasgow
Edwin W. Watson, Glasgow
Dave C. Farley, Billings
Raymond F. Utzman, Jr., Billings
Randall P. Crellin, Billings
Ronald A. Shaide, Fairview
Daniel R. Enebo, Glasgow
Michael D. Pattillo, Sidney
John H. Schnitzmeier, Chester
Gerald R. Williams, Lewistown
Larry R. Schmitt, Stanford
Wayne D. Chapman, Lewistown
Leo F. Jackson, Billings

Kay M. Roam, Billings
Michael P. Visser, Rapelje
Robert E. Rowe, Billings
Rex B. Humphrey, Billings
Taun U. Deverill, Billings
Thomas J. Lynch, Billings
James L. Pearson, Billings
Daniel J. Shaules, Billings
William L. Robeson, Billings
Craig L. Wiggs, Reedpoint
Rich C. Sanford, Bridger
Craig W. Feldman, Billings
Larry A. Mayer, Billings
Leslie A. Cox, Billings
Richard D. Fisher, Billings
Kenneth D. Peterson, Billings
Carl B. Hope, Big Horn
Kenneth C. Richardson, Billings
Todd M. Woltermann, Columbus
Kenneth E. Cysewski, Billings
Thomas E. Elliot, Billings
Les N. Hudson, Livingston
Curtis E. Clark, Billings
William J. Starr, Laurel
Thomas M. Foess, Livingston
Michael W. Beale, Great Falls
Terry R. Westphal, Whitefish
Steven D. Thompkins, Big Fork
James M. McNinch, Stevensville
Bradley J. Anderson, Dillon
James F. Ellis, Great Falls
Arthur L. Tuell, Thompson Falls
Mark S. St. Sauver, Bigfork
Albert A. DeVore, Missoula
Cole T. Chandler, Havre
Larry T. Lofthouse, Great Falls
Darrell J. Monson, Great Falls
Ted J. Farrow, Butte
Michael P. Scharf, Deer Lodge
Theodore T. Ralls, Darby
Tammi M. Morton, Kalispell
Clifford M. James, Jr., Kalispell
Kimberly A. Ord, Conrad
Curt R. Oedewaldt, Shelby

ATP

Wilbur Van Sant Martin, Missoula
(MEL)
Gary L. Smestad, Great Falls
Walter E. Malone, Miles City
Michael E. Walsh, Billings
Steven C. Baer, Billings
Richy A. Bjelkevig, Billings
Norman B. McLane, Laurel
Richard D. Hoffman, Bozeman

INSTRUCTOR

Charles O. Moore, Roundup
Donald C. Paul, Clancy (Renewal)
William C. Paullin, Kalispell
(PASEL)
Larry E. Steck, Helena (CFI ASEL)
Deanna R. Strand-Foss, Kalispell
(CASEL)
Betty A. Sweeting, Glasgow
James H. Rothrock, Billings
Marla K. Patterson, Billings

Thomas C. Lampee II, Wolf Point
John R. Stene, Malta
Alfred E. Hardy, Circle (Reinstated)
Harold M. Johnstone, Angela
Sage H. Olson, Billings
Raymond D. Van Cleave, Billings
Ruben G. Weibert, Hardin (Renewed)
Gary A. Roam, Billings
Henry L. Esp, Hardin (Renewed)
Allen J. Coomber, Billings (Private)
Richard C. Thomas, Billings
John S. Poling, Billings (Renewed)
Steven K. Holding, Billings
Roger D. Meggars, Baker (Renewed)
Victor G. Wokal, Glasgow (Renewed)
James A. Murray, Savage (Renewed)
Keith W. Fitchett, Laurel (Reinstated)
Walter E. Malone, Miles City
Roger L. Maki, Missoula (Renewed)
Stanley G. Colton, Lewistown
Donald H. Newton, Lewistown
John B. Bethel, Baker (Renewed)
Edgar Justesen, Glendive (Renewed)
Irving W. Muir, Billings (Renewed)
John D. Stanek, Billings
Roger D. Schmierer, Sidney

INSTRUMENT

Kenneth C. Conrad, Billings (CFI)
Charles R. Peavy, Billings (PA)
Howard A. Carlson, Seeley Lake (PA)
Jeffery S. Mattheis, Billings (CFI)
Gary A. Roam, Billings (PA)
Rae F. Young, Red Lodge (PA)

MULTI-ENGINE

John R. Stene, Malta (CA)
Ronald D. Bradshaw, Billings (CFI)
James A. Murray, Savage (CA)
Bill A. Brosz, Great Falls (CA)
Glen F. Munro, Butte (CA)
Milton V. Kramlick, Billings (PA)
Kenneth C. Conrad, Billings (CA)
John M. Sindelar, Billings (PA)
Mathew W. Caudill, Billings (CA)
Laurence R. Hoem, Grey Cliff (CA)
William F. Helsper, Missoula
(CFI ASEL)
Bruce E. Depew, Missoula
(CASEL & INSTR)
Gregory B. Mecklenburg, Bozeman
(CFI ASEL & INSTR)
Merton P. Myhre, Helena
(CASEL, INSTR)
Michael S. Pemper, Somers
(CASEL & INSTR)

COMMERCIAL

Richard A. Danylieko, Billings
Marvin L. Lange, Billings
John E. Stanek, Billings
Gary A. Roam, Billings
David J. Wang, Billings
Duane W. Scanland, Corvallis
Richard E. Geiger, Jr., Helena
Deanna R. Strand-Foss, Kalispell



New Tenant

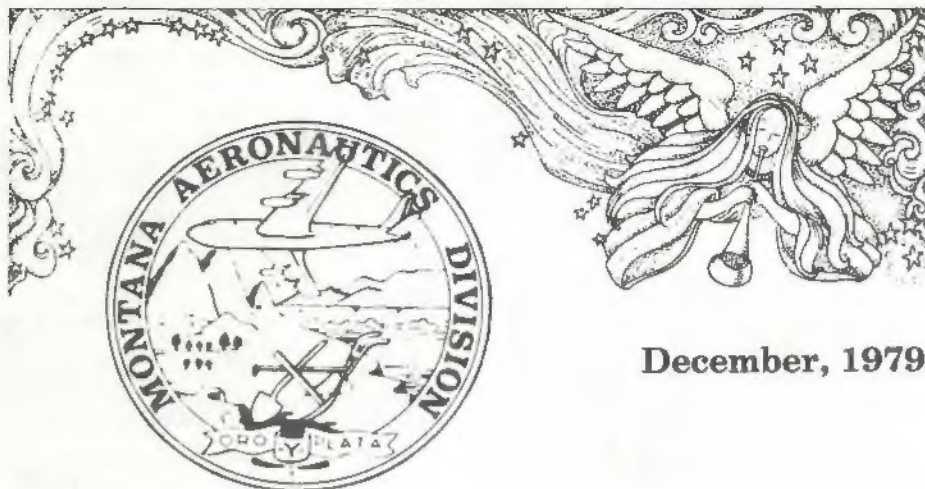
Helena's old air terminal isn't sitting idle. Morrison Flying Service has remodeled the old Helena terminal building which now has a lounge for visitors and customers, office spaces, a pilots' lounge, a flight planning area and a coffee shop that will open the first of the new year. Morrison is the oldest aviation service in Montana and has been in service since 1931. Services offered are chartered flights, contract flying, flight instruction, aircraft rental and sales of aircraft and fuel. The service is open seven days a week from 7:30 a.m. to dark (winter hours) and is also available on call.



MEMBER

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STATE AVIATION OFFICIALS

PURPOSE— "To foster aviation, as an industry, as a mode of transportation for persons and property and as an arm of the national defense; to join with the Federal Government and other groups in research, development, and advancement of aviation; to develop uniform laws and regulations; and to otherwise encourage cooperation and mutual aid among the several states."



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Helena, Montana 59601

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